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Holyoke High School celebrates graduation

By Quinn Suomala
Correspondent

HOLYOKE – Holyoke High School celebrated its 206 graduating seniors on Friday, June 5.

The class ended their time at HHS proud, with 29 high honors students, 44 honors students and 8 students earning the seal of bilitery.

All of the seniors were sent off with words of advice and encouragement from students, faculty and members of the community.

Principal Lori McKenna started off the ceremony by sharing her pride in the graduates and faith in their abilities to achieve their goals.

“Class of 2026 you are worthy,” McKenna said. “Don’t let anyone make you question your place, ever and...trust that you have something valuable to offer the world.”

She reminded students that they are capable just as themselves. Mayor Joshua Garcia shared the same sentiment.

“The moment you stop trying to be somebody else, you will become the strongest version of yourself,” he said.

Valedictorian Samantha Rodriguez also shared her faith in her fellow classmates.

“We are so strong as a class and individually we are so much more,” she said. “Each of us will go on to do much bigger and better things.”

Superintendent Anthony Soto took the opportunity to give the students some last words of advice. He encouraged students to keep persevering and reminded them that while things may be hard, they will be stronger for it.

“Learn how to handle hard things,” Soto said. “Things don’t get easier, what happens is that you get stronger, you get wiser and you get better at handling challenges.”

Each student had to overcome obstacles in order to walk the graduation stage.



Holyoke High School graduates threw their caps in the air in celebration of completing their high school careers.

Turley photos by Quinn Suomala

School Committee Chair Dr. Yadilette Rivera-Colon shared a story of her own personal struggles.

“A high school guidance counselor straight up told me, ‘our students don’t go to college, they join the workforce,’” she said. “I wondered if that counselor was right, but I kept going, and I didn’t just graduate [college], I went on to earn my doctorate in molecular and cellular biology from UMass.

I’m neurodivergent, the first in my family to go to college, a doctor, a scientist and a leader in your school district.”

Rivera-Colon wanted the graduating seniors to know that even if others doubted them or if something stood in their way they could still reach their goals.

“I see that unstoppable spirit in the class of 2026,” she said. “Look at your own strength, and ask yourself,



Dexter Williams displayed his diploma.

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Senior Ema Maldonado performed a solo in her final performance as a Holyoke High School student.



Anaya Rosario proudly showed off her diploma.

Data center defined, and more reaction to proposed project

By Brendan Rooney
Correspondent

HOLYOKE – As of late, the city, along with the region have been navigating the main point of discussion regarding the implementation and potential placement of data centers, and the official justification and purpose of what they truly are, along with what regulations and safeguards should be put in place.

One important question to answer is, what is a data center?

The official term is a massive physical facility that house thousands of networked computer servers and data storage drives. They act as the foundational infrastructure of the internet, securely storing, processing, and delivering the digital information that powers modern apps, websites, and cloud services. However, they are also known for Massive Energy Consumption, as according to official reports and sources, data centers are known for consuming vast amounts of electricity to run servers and

power-hungry cooling systems, often accounting for significant percentages of total national energy grids.

In addition, they are notorious for high water

tional reports indicate the centers can yield harmful nitrogen oxides and particulate matter into surrounding communities, due to some centers installing natural gas turbines

shared. In addition, he also noted that the project could put a long-vacant property back on the tax rolls and help improve a dark section of the location that is blighted and currently attracts negative activity to the area and surrounding neighborhood.

However, the reaction then caught the attention of and voice of the public, which sparked debate among all levels of government, including a conversation among the state and local levels, one that the Holyoke City Council heeded.

As of last week, the topic of discussion rose to the top of the ticket and transferred over into the realm of social media as many continue to raise initial questions, which saw Garcia share a statement in relation to the city’s and general public’s mixed reaction, to quell and bring together the discussion by acknowledging whether the city is moving forward or not, citing, “Holyoke has potential.”

“People say we have the

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“I firmly believe that Massachusetts needs to continue to be a leader of technological innovation and advancement; in fact I think it is vital for Massachusetts to remain a competitive with other states however, these advances cannot be born on the backs of residents.”

- State Sen. John Velis

usage, as facilities rely on millions of gallons of freshwater daily for evaporative cooling towers to keep servers from overheating.

In addition, data centers can also severely stress local drinking water supplies, especially in drought-prone or water-scarce regions, and Carbon and Air Pollution: Relying heavily on standard power grids means data centers indirectly drive fossil fuel emissions. And lastly, addi-

and using diesel backup generators.

And in recent news, Holyoke was the latest community to come forward and share the initial reveal of the 20 MW facility that looks to take shape and begin operations at the 100 Water St. location, which was seen by Mayor Joshua Garcia as a way of possible income, citing the potential of “generating \$2 million+ annually in real property taxes,” Garcia

Residents plea for rent stabilization resolution

By Quinn Suomala
Correspondent

HOLYOKE – Residents have asked the city council to approve the rent stabilization resolution.

People from almost every ward in Holyoke came out on June 1 to share their reasoning for the city council to support the rent stabilization resolution.

“People who did everything right are asking what can I do?,” Jeanette Rivera said. “Tonight I am asking you to be that answer.”

The community members described how challenging it is to be a renter in Holyoke with ever rising rent costs. According to Rivera, rent for many has jumped 30 or even 60% a year.

“The cost of rent is consistently the number one thing that I hear from neighbors expressing

concern, frustration, and in some cases dire stress about,” Gabbi Perry said. “What is Holyoke if our community can’t stay here?”

According to Emma Kerr, the average cost of a single room apartment in Holyoke is \$1,300 a month, which is more than her mortgage. This is more than 55% of the average Holyoke residents’ monthly living expenses.

“A person’s monthly living expenses are about \$2,360,” Kerr said. “So to afford a Holyoke one-bedroom and only spend about 30% of your monthly income, you would need to make \$4,333 a month[...]. There are several people on the Holyoke city payroll who do not make that.”

Even community members who earn more still can struggle to make ends meet with rent.

“I moved back last

See RENT, page 12

City man convicted of rape, indecent assault charges

HOLYOKE – Alexander Theroux, 36, of Holyoke, was sentenced on Wednesday, June 3, 2026, in Hampden Superior Court after the Court found him guilty of two counts of rape and one count of indecent assault and battery stemming from the sexual assault of a woman he had agreed to drive home in July 2023.

According to a press release from the office of Hampden County District Attorney Anthony Gulluni, following a bench trial, the Court found Theroux guilty on all charges on May 27, 2026. The Commonwealth asked for 12-14 years in state prison with three years' probation on and after his

release. Theroux was ultimately sentenced to 5 to 7 years in state prison, followed by three years of probation on and after his release.

The evidence presented at trial established that during the early morning hours of July 8, 2023, the victim became disoriented after a night out in Westfield and contacted friends for help because she believed she had been drugged. She reached out to people she knew and trusted, including Theroux, whom she knew through work.

After meeting the victim in a Westfield parking lot, Theroux and another individual agreed to drive her home, with the other individ-

ual following in a second car. Evidence presented during the bench trial showed that the victim was in a vulnerable condition and repeatedly sought assistance from a friend throughout the ride. Text messages introduced at trial showed the victim telling a friend that she needed help and expressing fear and confusion about what was happening.

The victim testified that while driving her home, Theroux sexually assaulted her despite her repeated objections. The evidence established that Theroux drove past the victim's home multiple times while a friend became increasingly concerned as they monitored her

location and attempted to contact her. Text messages presented to the jury showed the victim repeatedly asking for help and attempting to communicate with a friend as the assault occurred.

Witnesses testified that when the victim arrived at a friend's home shortly afterward, she was visibly distraught and immediately disclosed the assault. The Commonwealth also presented forensic evidence collected during a Sexual Assault Nurse Examination, as well as testimony from investigators and witnesses who corroborated the victim's account.

During sentencing, the victim wrote an impact state-

ment which was read to the Court by Assistant District Attorney Catherine Joyce, where the victim recounted the profound impact the assault and subsequent court proceedings had on her life. She described feeling both relief and exhaustion following the verdict and sentencing, telling the court that she finally felt able to breathe again.

Hampden District Attorney Anthony D. Gulluni praised the victim's courage and the work of those involved in the prosecution.

"This case is a reminder that sexual violence is often committed by someone the victim knows and trusts," said Gulluni. "The

victim sought help from people she believed would ensure her safety and instead was exploited while in an extremely vulnerable condition. I commend her courage in coming forward, participating in the investigation, and testifying at trial. This sentence holds the defendant accountable for his actions and ensures justice has been served. I also commend the investigators and my team, including ADA Joyce and VWA Ennis for their hard work and commitment to justice."

The Commonwealth was represented by Assistant District Attorney Catherine Joyce and Victim Witness Advocate Shavon Ennis.

Arts League to be featured

HOLYOKE – During the month of June, the Wistariahurst Museum at 238 Cabot St. in Holyoke will host an exhibition of artwork by members of the Holyoke Arts League (HAL).

The museum and gardens are the historic home of the Skinner Family that owned and operated the Skinner Silk Mill, the world's premier silk fabric production facility in the city's Canal District.

We hope you will attend our opening reception and meet the artists who live in Western Massachusetts and Northern Connecticut on Monday, June 1, from 5-7 p.m. This event is free

and open to the public. Throughout the month of June, the exhibition may be viewed free of charge during the museum's open hours, Mondays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., and Tuesdays from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

This juried show will include entries in oil and pastel, watercolor, acrylic, tempera, gouache and other non-oil wet media, graphite, charcoal, printmaking and other graphic media, sculpture and ceramics.

Light refreshments will be served.

The arts league was founded in 1923 and is now celebrating its 102nd year in Holyoke.

The League holds artist

demonstrations and weekly adult figure drawing sessions. For more information about HAL, visit <https://www.holyoke-arts-league.org> online. You may also address inquiries to holyokeartsleague@gmail.com.

For more information about Wistariahurst, call (413) 322-5660 or online at info@wistariahurst.org.

You may direct inquiries about Wistariahurst by emailing munselle@holyoke.org.

This program is funded in part by a grant from the Holyoke Local Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Mass. Cultural Council, a state agency.

Businesses invited to Chamber Cup

HOLYOKE — The Greater Holyoke Chamber is inviting businesses, professionals, local leaders, and community partners from across Western Massachusetts to participate in the 58th Annual Chamber Cup on Friday, Sept. 25, at Westover Golf Course. Registration is now open for the annual event, which brings together the regional business community for a day of golf, networking, visibility, and relationship-building.

The Chamber Cup offers companies and organizations a valuable way to connect outside the traditional meeting setting. Participants can build business relationships, strengthen team connections, and engage with professionals

from across the region in a relaxed and welcoming environment. The event is open to Chamber members and non-members alike, making it a regional opportunity for businesses looking to expand their reach and community presence.

Businesses can participate in several ways, including registering a foursome, sponsoring a hole or meal, donating raffle prizes, or volunteering during the event. Each option offers a different path to visibility and engagement, whether a company wants to host clients, recognize employees, promote its brand, or support a signature community event.

The day will include golf at Westover Golf Course, breakfast, lunch,

raffles, and opportunities to connect with business owners, executives, public officials, nonprofit leaders, and professionals from throughout Western Massachusetts. For sponsors and raffle donors, the event provides added exposure before and during the tournament, helping businesses stay visible among a broad and engaged audience.

The Greater Holyoke Chamber encourages businesses to register early, secure sponsorship opportunities, and plan now for participation in the 2026 Chamber Cup. Companies interested in playing, sponsoring, donating raffle prizes, or volunteering can visit holyokechamber.com or contact the Chamber for more information.

Library loaning out tablets to patrons

HOLYOKE – The library is offering tablets for loan to patrons with a Holyoke address and a valid CW MARS library card. The devices are provided through funding from the Massachusetts Broadband Institute. The goal of the program is to expand access to education, workforce training, and telehealth by establishing public device lending programs. Devices are fully loaded with software. Please call or stop by the library for more details. Tablets should be used to support activity in one of three categories:

- **Workforce Development:** Allow for job-seekers to build skills that support them in crafting résumés, complete online training, apply for jobs and pursue remote work.

- **Education:** Strengthen participation of individuals to complete virtual coursework, homework help, adult education and digital literacy training.

- **Health Monitoring & Access:** Provide devices for telehealth visits, patient portal navigation, accessing health information and supporting remote patient monitoring programs.

Summer reading to kick off on June 25

HOLYOKE – The Summer Reading Program at Holyoke Public Library will kick off on Thursday, June 25, with a party going

from 1 to 5:30 p.m. There will be free ice cream during the entire time, and balloons available. There will be a drag story

hour with Holyoke Pride held at 1 p.m., face painting available from 1:30 to 4:30 p.m., and a movie from 3 to 5 p.m. This year's theme

is "Plant a seed, Read." and summer programs are available for children, teenagers, and adults.

Wheels for Hope Car Show returns to High Street

HOLYOKE – The third annual Wheels for Hope Car Show will return to High Street on Saturday, June 27.

The show, which will run from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., is a fundraiser for cancer patients and their families. Money raised will be divided among Holyoke Medical Center's Oncology Department; Rays for Hope,

a Western Massachusetts initiative dedicated to the fight against breast cancer; and children diagnosed with cancer.

Holyoke's High Street, from Cabot Street to Appleton Street, will be closed to traffic during the one-day show.

The entry fee for exhibitors is \$30.

Motorcycles and power wheels are welcome. Prizes will be awarded in five categories. A special trophy will be presented by a cancer survivor.

The show includes raf-

fles, food, music, face painting and more. Coolers will not be allowed. The rain date is July 11.

For more information, contact Carmen Rodriguez, (413) 210-8896.

Council on Aging holding health, wellness fair event

SOUTH HADLEY – The South Hadley Council-on-Aging will be holding the 2026 Aging in Place: Health and Wellness Fair coming up on Wednesday, June 24 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The event will be held at the South Hadley Council-on-Aging located at 45 Dayton St. The event is open to the public, including seniors,

family members, and caregivers. There will be 40-plus vendors and elder care providers and free raffles and giveaways. This event will provide attendees with comprehensive information on a variety of aging in place options, equipment, devices, services, and resources. For more information, call 413-538-5030.

Golf Tournament seeks support for Wreaths Across America

AGAWAM – The Friends of the Massachusetts Veterans Memorial Cemetery at Agawam and the Friends of the Agawam Veterans Council proudly announce their Second Annual Golf Tournament in support of Wreaths Across America, a national effort to honor and remember our fallen veterans during the holiday season.

This exciting event promises a day of camaraderie, remembrance, and community support. Golfers, sponsors, and community members are invited to participate and help lay wreaths at the graves of veterans resting at the Agawam Veterans Memorial Cemetery this

December.

The Tournament will be held on June 28. Registration begins at 10:30 a.m. and golfing starts at 12 noon at Agawam Municipal Golf Course. The costs are \$135 for an individual golfer, \$540 for a team of four, \$30 for dinner only, and \$100 to sponsor a tee. Other sponsorships are also available.

To Register or Sponsor, contact Marline Claremont at 413-221-9548 or email wreathfriends@gmail.com. Registration forms are available upon request. Join us in honoring those who served with a round of golf, good food, and great company—all for a noble cause.

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413-543-0791
donovanspub.com

Sun. 12pm - 8pm; Mon.-Thurs. 11:30am-9:30pm; Fri. & Sat. 11:30am - 11pm

Sat., June 13 Frank Serafino	Sun., June 14 The Healy's 2-5pm	Sat., June 20 Corner Boys
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Are you having difficulty communicating with your partner, struggling with boundaries, and healthy relationships?

We invite you to join us Friday afternoons from 1-2:30 pm to explore these topics and more.

This group will be held in zoom, is educational, confidential, and free.

Please contact **Pat James 413-726-8661.**

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Deadline is June 17 to apply for Ward 7 school committee

HOLYOKE – The Holyoke School Committee has accepted a May 16 letter of resignation from Ward 7 School Committee member Ellie Wilson and will follow established procedures to select her replacement.

“My life has significantly changed over the past several months. I am no longer able to dedicate the time required to be effective,” Ms. Wilson said in her letter of resignation. “I am proud of the work that the Holyoke School Committee has accomplished to come out of Receivership. Most importantly, I am proud of the work the Committee does to remain student-focused and support the HPS staff.”

Ms. Wilson first joined the School Committee in 2022 and was re-elected twice more. She started her third two-year term in January 2026. She led the work on updating school committee policies in our transition out of receivership.

According to the Holyoke City Charter, the School Committee vacancy will be filled by an

appointment made jointly by the School Committee, the City Council, and Mayor Joshua Garcia. The appointee will serve for the remainder of Ms. Wilson’s 2-year term as the Ward 7 representative. When the term is up in 2028, the seat will be filled by the voters during a regular election.

The City of Holyoke invites interested residents to apply for interim appointment to the Ward 7 School Committee seat to complete Ms. Wilson’s term. Those interested are asked to send their letters of interest, accompanied by a resume to:

City of Holyoke
Personnel Office
20 Korean Veterans Plaza
Holyoke, MA 01040

Letters of interest and resumes may also be submitted by email.

Applications will be accepted up until June 17, although candidates are encouraged to submit their interest sooner than the deadline. Candidates will be interviewed during a June 17 joint meeting of the Holyoke School Committee, City Council, and Mayor Joshua Garcia.

School calendar approved for next year

HOLYOKE – The Holyoke Public Schools has finalized the 2026-27 annual calendar, and it is now available for viewing on the district website.

Some important things to keep in mind about the annual calendar:

- The first day of school for students in grades 1-12 is Monday, August 24, 2026.

- The first day of school for students in PreK and kindergarten is Wednesday, August 26, 2026.

- All HPS schools will be in session for students on January 4 and 5, 2027, and

closed on January 6 for the Three Kings Day holiday.

- The calendar includes seven 3-hour early release days for students, including October 7, November 18, December 9, December 23, March 10, May 12, as well as on the last day of school. Of these days, two are family conference days (November 18 and March 10).

- The last day of school for students will be Thursday, June 10, 2027 if there are no snow days, and Thursday, June 17, 2027 if the district uses a total of five snow days during the course of the school year.

A few changes to school start and end times:

- Next year’s schedule for all schools is posted on the district website.

- The length of all elementary school days will be reduced by 15 minutes, for a total of 6 hours and 30 minutes. Doors at McMahon will open at 7:45 a.m., with an 8 a.m. school start and 2:30 p.m. dismissal. Doors for all other elementary schools will open at 8:45 a.m., with a 9:00 a.m. start time and 3:30 p.m. dismissal time. The elementary school start and end times were modified to be one-hour apart, which

allows HPS to share buses across schools and avoid additional transportation costs.

- HPS will discontinue the practice of one-hour early release days on Wednesdays. Early-start schools will end their days at 2:30 p.m. and late-start schools will end their days at 3:30 p.m. on all days—except for the seven 3-hour early release days noted in the calendar.

- The start and end times for half-day PreK programs will also be adjusted, with both the morning and afternoon sessions running for 2 hours and 30 minutes each.

HCC offering introductory golf lessons

HOLYOKE – Interested in learning to play golf but don’t know where to start? Holyoke Community College is offering weekly introductory golf lessons at Twin Hills Country Club in Longmeadow led by LPGA teaching pro Marissa Kulig Crow.

For flexibility and convenience, each five-week lesson series runs on either Wednesdays, Thursdays, or Saturdays, with different start dates and times.

Wednesday sessions meet from 10-11 a.m. June 17 through July 15.

Thursday sessions meet from 6-7 p.m. June 18 through July 16.

Saturday sessions meet from 10-11 a.m. June 20 through July 25 (no class on July 4).

Kulig Crow is an LPGA professional from Westfield and director of instruction at Twin Hills.

These introductory golf classes are designed for begin-

ners. In five, one-hour long sessions, she will teach new golfers everything they need to know to play their first round of golf.

Classes will cover the basics of the golf swing, putting, short game techniques, rules and etiquette. Golf clubs will be provided at the course; and Kulig Crow will make equipment recommendations for players who want to buy their own.

The cost for each five-

week series is \$199, which includes a golf workbook and reference guide.

Please note that in accordance with golf course etiquette, men should wear collared shirts, pants, or golf shorts. Cargo shorts, cutoff shorts, and jeans are not allowed.

Women should wear pants, skirts or golf shorts. Jeans, leggings, racer back or tube tops, short shorts, or short skirts are not allowed.

To register for a five-week introductory golf lesson series, please go to: hcc.edu/golf.



DTC sponsoring food drive

SOUTH HADLEY – The South Hadley Democratic Town Committee is sponsoring a food drive to benefit Neighbors Helping Neighbors on June 27 from 9 a.m. to 12 noon at South Hadley High School (rain or shine).

Residents can drop off non-perishable items in the high school parking lot--no need to even exit your car as members of the committee will be on hand to unload your donations and place them in the

on-site Neighbors Helping Neighbors van.

All non-expired, non-perishable items will be accepted, but the following items are most in demand:

- Any and all feminine hygiene products
- Shampoo/conditioner
- Toothpaste
- Deodorant
- Bar soap
- Soups
- Canned meats such as spam, beef stew, corned beef, hash
- Pet Food-Canned and Dry for cats and dogs

Please check expiration dates before donating.

Monetary donations are also welcome, with checks made payable to Neighbors Helping Neighbors.

Additional information about the June 27 event is available at southhadleydemocrats.com. Questions can be sent to southhadleydemocrats@gmail.com. You can also follow South Hadley Democrats on Facebook ([facebook/SouthHadleyDTC](https://facebook.com/SouthHadleyDTC)) and on Instagram (instagram.com/southhadleydems).

Busy month of activities at UCCH

HOLYOKE – June is quite the busy month at The United Congregational Church of Holyoke.

Friday, June 5 is the final edition of Music in the Parks. Music in the Parks is a choral competition that draws young singers from across the region, making each event a wonderful opportunity to experience the energy, talent, and dedication of young performers at their best.

The June Community Meal is scheduled for the following Friday, June 12 at

5 p.m. We’ll be serving pizza and salad and will follow dinner up with a family movie at 6 p.m. All Are Welcome, Everyone Eats and its absolutely free of charge.

We’ll be celebrating America on Sunday, June 28 at 4 p.m. with a free of charge concert sponsored by the Western Massachusetts chapter of the American Guild of Organists. During this patriotic event, music that celebrates America and music by American composers will be performed on a variety of instruments by

volunteers. This event is also open to the public.

The United Congregational Church of Holyoke is an Open and Affirming congregation of the United Church of Christ. We welcome all individuals, regardless of where they are on their journey. If you’d like to learn more about UCCH, please visit our website at www.uccholyoke.org, find us on Facebook or Instagram, or call our office at 413-532-1483 Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Premier symphonic wind ensemble band to headline opening night of Summer Concert Series

SOUTH HADLEY – The A Natural Concert Band, a premier symphonic wind ensemble drawing professional musicians from Massachusetts, Vermont, and New Hampshire, will perform at the South Hadley Town Commons on June 18 at 6:30 p.m. kicking off the 2026 South Hadley Summer Concert Series. In the event of rain, the performance will be held across the street at

the Center Congregational Church. The performance marks the band’s first appearance outside of the tri-state border region in many years.

Founded in June 2014, the approximately fifty-member ensemble is composed primarily of music educators and professional musicians committed to performing the highest caliber of symphonic wind music. The June 18 program will feature works by

celebrated composers including John Williams, Connie Ellisor, Percy Grainger, and Julie Giroux, among others.

The concert will also include the Massachusetts premiere of Solutions, by composer Sonya Leonore Stahl. The A Natural Concert Band has a distinguished history of presenting premiere performances, having been the first ensemble to perform Peter Boyer’s Fanfare for

Tomorrow following its world premiere by the United States Marine Band at the inauguration of President Joseph R. Biden.

The concert is free and open to the public. Donations will be accepted at the event, with proceeds benefiting the South Hadley Public Schools music program. The band and organizers gratefully acknowledge the support of Gerry’s Music Shop, whose

commitment to music education in the region helped make this performance possible.

“What an amazing time and honor to have them perform twice on the beautiful grounds of the Whately library,” said Wendy Peppercorn, former Head Librarian at Whately’s S. White Dickinson Memorial Library. “The air was alive with beautiful concert music.”

For more information

about the A Natural Concert Band, visit the ensemble’s official Facebook page at facebook.com/ANaturalConcertBand. For updates on the South Hadley Summer Concert Series, visit facebook.com/southhadleyrecreation. To support South Hadley Public School Music, donate at <https://givebuttr.com/shmpa-ongoing-support> or contact them at www.southhadleymusic.org

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Guest Column

SOCIAL SECURITY Matters

By Russell Gloor



Why can't I get a lump sum death benefit from my wife?

Dear Rusty:

My wife passed away in September 2025 at age 64.

We had been married for 43 years and started collecting benefits when I turned 62 and she was 63. She did not have enough work credits to claim her own SS and thus collected on my record. SSA told me that I was not entitled to receive the lousy \$255 death benefit because my wife was collecting on my work record. Is this correct?

fit: the one-time lump sum death benefit is normally paid to the eligible surviving spouse of a deceased person, who was collecting Social Security.

But if there is no surviving spouse to receive the onetime payment, the death benefit may be paid to someone else who was also a dependent of the deceased. That might be a minor surviving child or a surviving adult disabled child, who was collecting dependent benefits from the deceased person's SS record. In rare cases, a dependent parent may be paid if no other surviving dependents are eligible. FYI, ex-spouses are not eligible for a death benefit from a former spouse.

The lump-sum death benefit must be applied for by contacting Social Security and the benefit must be claimed within two years of the person's death. You will need to verify your identity and confirm your eligibility for this survivor benefit and you will need to provide other information about the deceased also including a death certificate.

There is an SSA form to apply for the lump sum death benefit (SSA-8), but calling your local SS office or 1-800-772-1213 to make an appointment to apply for the one-time lump-sum death benefit in person is usually all that is needed.

The Association Mature Citizens Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. This article is intended for information purposes and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the Association Mature Citizens Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association. To submit a question, visit amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory or email us at ssadvisory@amacfoundation.org. Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.

Dear Grieving:

We extend our sincere condolences on your wife's passing.

But I must tell you that what the Social Security Administration told you is correct.

Although we often see assertions that the so-called "one-time lump sum death benefit" is always paid, there are specific rules for when that admittedly small SS benefit is available. And there are also specific rules regarding who is eligible to receive it.

Essentially, the lump sum death benefit is paid when the deceased person was collecting Social Security retirement benefits or at least entitled to SS retirement benefits. And that one-time lump sum death benefit usually goes to the deceased person's surviving spouse, more on that later.

But for the death benefit to be paid, the deceased person must have been collecting Social Security retirement benefits or was at least entitled to SS retirement benefits.

In your specific case, because your wife was not eligible for her own SS retirement benefit and was, instead, just collecting a spousal benefit from your SS record, you unfortunately are not able to collect the lump-sum death benefit as your wife's surviving spouse. So, what you were told by Social Security about this special survivor benefit is, indeed, correct.

For information, here is a bit more on who can collect the SS death bene-



Guest Column

Foxgloves take the stage in June

I came around the corner of the house and to my surprise, the purple foxglove was in flower! Yippee! This is just the start of a wonderful sequence of blooms lasting the rest of the month and then some. Read on, straight from the archives to learn more about these unique plants.

Those of us who favor romantic, old-fashioned flowers have likely devoted some space in our gardens to the common purple foxglove (*Digitalis purpurea*) or one of its cultivars. This is for good reason, as there are few plants more breathtaking than a foxglove in full bloom. Imagine three to five-foot tall spires of uniquely marked bell-shaped flowers in shades of white, pink, and rose.

One well-grown plant may yield five or more stalks! Group several plants together for a show stopping display come the end of June.

Native to western Europe, the common foxglove has had a place in North American gardens since its introduction during colonial times.

There has always been a mysterious side to foxgloves, due in part to an unusual name and the potent medicine that is obtained from the plant.

Legend has it that foxglove was derived from "folk's glove," folks referring to the elves and fairies of country lore. Another legend tells that the fox needed magical gloves to steal a chicken or two.

A less fanciful explanation traces glove to gleow in Old English; a gleow was an ancient musical instrument made of bells suspended from a curved frame.

In 1785 William Withering, an English physician, published a decade's worth of studies devoted to



by Roberta McQuaid

placement of florets horizontally around the five-foot stem makes viewing the unique inner markings of the flowers especially easy.

There are other more subtle species of foxglove worthy of placement in your garden.

One of my favorites is the Rusty Foxglove (*Digitalis ferruginea*). Small flowers the color of liquid gold bloom up three to six-foot stems late in the summer.

Although touted as being a biennial this species has returned for several years in my part shade, moisture retentive location.

The yellow foxglove is a reliable perennial, shorter than most, only 24-30 inches tall and blooming a soft yellow in early June. This species also prefers part shade and adequate moisture.

The Grecian foxglove, a true biennial, has grayish flowers, blooming in July up three-foot stems.

The straw foxglove is relatively new to my garden, blooming happily for the first time last summer. It is the most diminutive flower-wise of any mentioned thus far and it tops off about two and a half feet tall.

Whether you plant the common foxglove for a show stopping display or settle on one of its more subtle cousins, do give these old-fashioned beauties a place in your garden.

J.L. Hudson, Seedsman, of Star Route 2, Box 337, La Honda CA, 94020 offers an extensive collection of foxglove seed for sale. Send along \$1 for a very interesting catalog.

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 33 years she has held the position of staff horticulturist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to pouimette@turley.com with "Gardening Question" in the subject line.

the HOLYOKE Sun

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your health

By Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, RN
Guest Column



When it comes to your health insurance, whether private or government-provided, not paying attention to the details can be costly. Patient advocates like me do more than help clients in the hospital. We also spend a lot of time unraveling health insurance mysteries that can leave clients with thousands of dollars in medical bills.

You may have seen a recent article about a Florida woman whose health insurance, which she purchased through the federal exchange, was canceled because she was late with her premiums – a total of five cents.

Yes, for want of a nickel, she lost her insurance and began receiving large medical bills.

In health coverage, the details matter

Her premium had been \$0, but when she dropped her mother from the family policy because she had become eligible for Medicare, the premium became one cent per month. She figured it was a rounding error and didn't pay much attention to the letters saying she might lose her coverage because premium payments weren't met.

After five months, her insurer dropped her. Was it legal for them to do that? Yes. Did it make sense? Hardly. Her insurance has been restored now, but she's still disputing the bills she received while it was inactive.

Stay tuned.

I find that a lot of clients, and people in general, don't really understand the terms of their policies, which leads to insurance denials, insurance appeals or, in this case, loss of coverage.

No matter if your health coverage comes through an employer, an ACA exchange, Medicare or Medicare Advantage, you have to pay attention or risk large medical bills.

What do I mean by paying attention? Here are some tips that may keep you out of hot water.

Read and understand your policy

This means understanding what medical services are (and are not) covered, what premiums are due each month, what your deductibles and copays are, and what your annual out-of-pocket maximums are.

Insurance companies must use "clear and unambiguous" language in their policies, and any ambiguity is typically interpreted in favor of the policyholder. However, insurance policies often contain complex and

See HEALTH, page 11



Julie Midura
Guest Columnist

When we stepped onto the Appalachian Trail for a twenty-six day, 310-mile backpacking trip from Fontana Dam, North Carolina to Damascus, Virginia, we had no idea what adventures-and misadventures-lay ahead.

We had no idea that on our very first night in the Great Smoky Mountains, we would come face to face with a large black bear, who would lunge forward, clamp his enormous jaws around another hiker's backpack-which happened to be lying by my feet-and lumber off into the woods with it.

We never imagined that the same fearless bear would return to the campsite a half a dozen times throughout the night while we were snuggled in our 2-person sleeping bag. Or that we would be standing outside of our tent at midnight blowing whistles as the bear slowly approached us-the beam of light from our headlamps igniting the bears' eyes a golden yellow. Or that Tom would pick up a medium-sized boulder and lift it over his head in case the bear came any closer. Or that other backpackers who had been sleeping in the nearby shelter would race towards us with headlamps shining like spotlights through the shadowed forest, and one of them would dispense bear spray directly into the bear's face to finally ward it off for

A 320-mile hike on the Appalachian Trail

the last time.

Or that, due to this close encounter, Smoky Mountain National Park officials would close the campsite to hikers the following day.

This is the longest backpacking trip Tom and I have ever embarked on. In our attempt to hike all 2,200 miles of the Appalachian Trail, we know that we need to amp up the mileage with each trip we take. At 61 and 69 years old, we likely have limited time before our bodies protest against this type of strenuous activity.

But being out here is about so much more than making miles and achieving a goal. It's about rediscovering who we are AWAY from the creature comforts we are accustomed to. Away from the chaos. Away from the responsibilities. Away from the noise.

As I write this, we are halfway through our trip. We've been out here on trail for 13 days, hiking between 9 and 11 hours each day.

We have been awed by the power of nature in the aftermath of Hurricane Helene. Been pelted by torrential rain while thunder rumbled overhead and have melted in 90-degree heat under a blazing sun. We have stood on the highest mountain on the entire Appalachian Trail, the 6,640-foot summit of Kuwohi, formerly known as Clingmans's Dome. Played 'who's going to blink first' with a 5-foot long snake.

We've stood atop mountains looking at views that have taken our breath away, and we've sat side-by-side on the ground in the middle of the forest, our legs stretched out on the dirt and our heads leaning back against our backpacks, simply watching the clouds dance across the sky.

Tonight, we have pitched our tent on a bed of pine needles under a tree, not far from the summit of Big Bald. We are surrounded by twisted, gnarled trees and rocks the size of mobile homes. It feels as though we are in a cloak and dagger mystery novel.



Submitted photos

After eating our freeze-dried dinner of beef and pasta, we walked 150 feet up the trail to a small viewpoint, where we sat down on a large flat rock for almost an hour while waiting for the sun to meet the horizon.

We talked about everything. And nothing. Important things and nonsensical things.

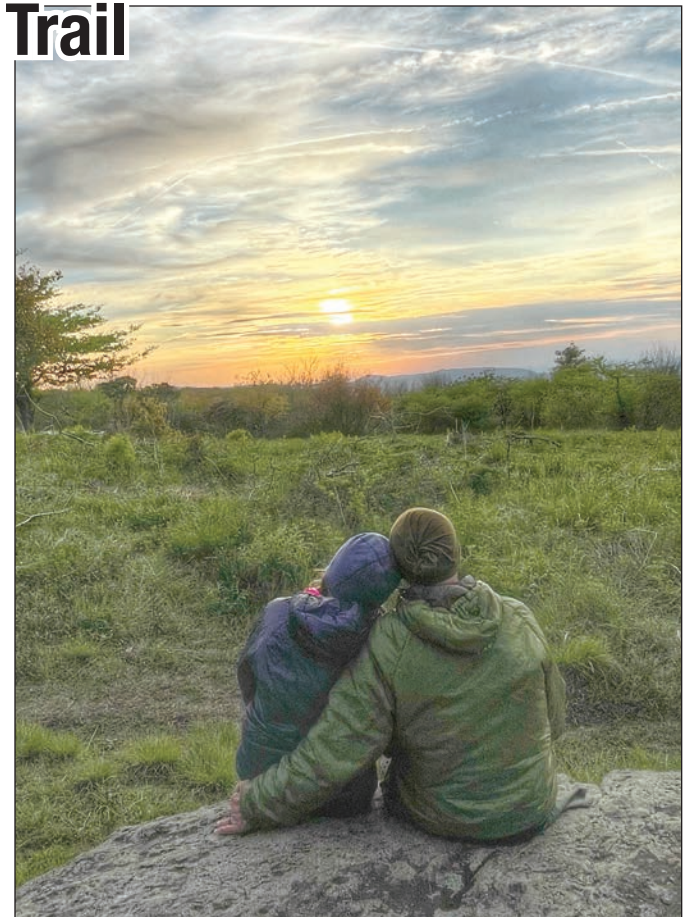
We relived our days out here so far. Reminiscenced about past adventures and future plans. Talked about family. Life. Dreams.

I snuggled in closer to Tom as the air chilled. And we waited.

The sun hung low. Clouds caught the fading sunlight and the golden orb blazed through them with such intensity that we briefly looked away. But when the sun drifted lower, we watched the world catch fire in shades of crimson, orange and gold. Like strokes on canvas, the sky was transformed, leaving us breathless.

Our conversation paused. The earth slowed. The world existed only in the present moment. Time stood still.

Once the sun disappeared behind the distant ridges-leaving the lingering shades of blue and pink and



purple behind-Tom and I stood, bowed our heads, and praised God for his goodness.

Then we slowly walked hand in hand back to our tent as darkness descended on the forest.

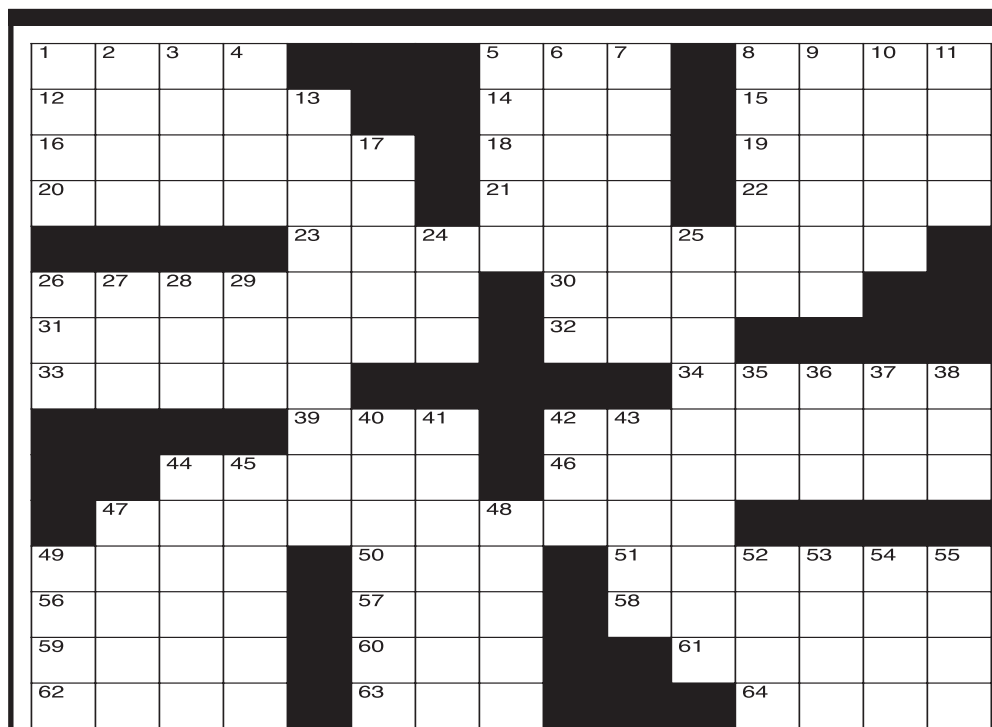
Over the past 8 years of backpacking, with well over

a thousand miles completed, there are about 5 nights on trail that I will never forget.

This is now one of them.

Stay tuned for the second half of our backpacking trip in a future edition of the newspaper.

Onward!



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Sealed with a kiss
- 5. Large sandwich
- 8. Swiss city
- 12. Japanese persimmons
- 14. When you hope to get somewhere
- 15. Wings
- 16. A name of God
- 18. Elected official (informal)
- 19. Abnormal breathing
- 20. "Seinfeld" character
- 21. Yearly tonnage (abbr.)
- 22. Something for sale
- 23. Gets rid of
- 26. One who touts
- 30. Blemished
- 31. Less than exciting
- 32. Born of
- 33. N. German town

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Scottish island
- 34. Notes
- 39. Move away from land
- 42. Vulcanite
- 44. More ignoble
- 46. Child actor Kirk
- 47. Written works
- 49. Sea vessel
- 50. Residue
- 51. Engraved
- 56. Having sufficient skill
- 57. One and only
- 58. Erase
- 59. Broad inlets
- 60. Nightmarish street
- 61. Play again
- 62. Formerly (archaic)
- 63. Add a color to change the color
- 64. Move swiftly and lightly

- 2. River in the Netherlands
- 3. Asian people
- 4. Fuzzy fruit
- 5. Ninth month (abbr.)
- 6. An idealistic social reformer
- 7. What you owe
- 8. Colorless mineral
- 9. Overjoyed
- 10. Rattling breaths
- 11. Tropical Old World tree
- 13. A citizen of Senegal
- 17. Greek mythological beauty
- 24. Wrath
- 25. Instrument to measure wind speed
- 26. Luxury carmaker
- 27. Bitterly regret
- 28. Not or
- 29. Google certification

- 35. Midway between northeast and east
- 36. Space station
- 37. Relating to the ears
- 38. Congressman
- 40. Yelled at
- 41. Rudely assertive
- 42. Defunct European money
- 43. Shared one's soul
- 44. Onion rolls
- 45. A way to state clearly
- 47. Relating to a lobe
- 48. Underlying message
- 49. Hollywood pig
- 52. Indicates pitch
- 53. Filament of a feather
- 54. Small ornamental ladies' bag for small articles
- 55. Diminish

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Holyoke High School graduates process into their ceremony while celebrating with friends and family.

Turley photos by Quinn Suomala



Principal Lori McKenna welcomed the seniors to the graduation ceremony.



Superintendent Anthony Soto sent the Holyoke High School seniors off with some words of advice.



School Committee Chair Dr. Yadilette Rivera-Colon sent the graduating seniors off with some inspirational words.



Salutatorian Ashanty Provost celebrated her fellow graduates from Holyoke High School.



Valedictorian Samantha Rodriguez reflected on her time at Holyoke High School.



Holyoke High School band and choir performed the Star Spangled Banner.



Perseverance Speaker Zuheily Bermudez reflected on the obstacles she overcame to walk the graduation stage.



A graduate celebrates finally walking across the stage.



Holyoke High School choir graduating seniors celebrated with their fellow classmates.



Mia Almodovar walked across the stage with pride.



Heaven Calderon shook hands with School Committee Chair Dr. Yadilette Rivera-Colon.



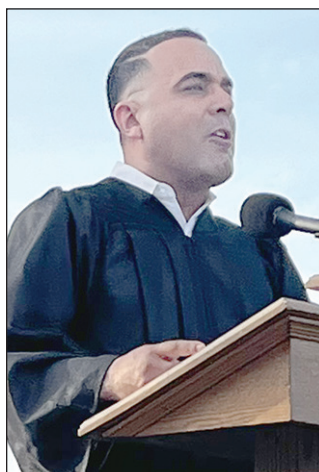
Jasiel Abreu Molina displayed his diploma.



Avery Feliciano celebrated receiving his diploma.



Aliyah Rivera waved at her friends and family after receiving her diploma.



Mayor Joshua Garcia reminded graduating seniors that Holyoke will always be their home.

HHS, from page 1

why not be the first one to go to college in your family? Why not start your own business or enter the workforce with pride? Why not be the voice that brings real change?"

The students also received inspiration from some of their fellow classmates. Perseverance speaker Zuheily Bermudez shared how hard it was for her to finish high school while also raising her daughter.

Despite the challenges,

she still walked the stage.

"I hope to continue this same perseverance as I move onto college," Bermudez said. "I plan to attend Springfield Technical Community College to study health sciences and continue working toward my dream career in nursing."

This spirit of perseverance is one Bermudez believes many of her classmates share. It will come in handy as they begin to grow into young adults.

Salutatorian Ashanty Provost knows that this per-

severance will be essential as they face the obstacles the world will bring them.

"We are stepping into a world that is in shambles," Provost said. "Our government is failing us, avoidable wars are taking over, and ICE is breaking our families. We need to grow and become the change our world desperately needs."

Holyoke High School's class of 2026 left their graduation with pride, and the encouragement of their community members and peers ringing in their ears.

SPORTS

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Blue Sox grab win

HOLYOKE — Through four innings on the Valley Blue Sox's Hall of Fame Night on Saturday, the difference between the Blue Sox and the Ocean State Waves was largely on the mound. Ocean State (0-3) used a pair of walks and a hit by pitch to spark a four-run fourth inning and take a 5-1 lead. Valley (1-0-1) answered in the eighth, scoring four runs with help from an error, two hit by pitches, a walk and a wild pitch, to complete a 6-5 comeback in the ninth at Mackenzie Stadium.

The full nine innings offered an early-season snapshot of the realities of summer baseball. Pitchers and hitters alike are adjusting to new roles, players have to click with new teammates almost immediately and it is the first competitive action many have seen in weeks.

For the Blue Sox, the turning point began after starter Jackson Hinchliffe navigated five innings despite running into trouble in the middle frames. After retiring six of the first seven batters he faced, Hinchliffe allowed five runs across the third and fourth innings, accompanied by two walks and a hit by pitch.

Rather than making an early move, Valley allowed the right-hander to finish out five innings and throw a total of 75 pitches. The decision proved significant as Gregory Bruno, Maddex LaBuda and Jake LeFrancois combined for four scoreless innings out of the bullpen, limiting

See SOX, page 8

Tri-County Baseball season opens up

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

THORNDIKE — PeoplesBank has captured the Tri-County League championship title the past twelve years.

Teddy Bear Pools and Spas and the St. Joseph's Saints are two of the TCL teams looking to end the PeoplesBank dynasty this summer.

The first meeting of the regular season between the two squads was an old fashion slugfest.

Teddy Bear Pools pounded out 17 base hits leading to a 12-6 victory over the Saints at St. Joe's Park, last Friday night.

"It's always a lot of fun whenever we play against St. Joe's, especially at this field," said Teddy Bear Pools player/coach Ryan Magni. "We had trouble scoring runs last year, but we did the job offensively, which made the difference in tonight's game."

The road win improved

Teddy Bear Pools record to 2-0.

Before moving to Teddy Bear Pools, Magni played eight seasons for St. Joe's. His brother, Brandon, is listed on the Saints roster, but he didn't play in last Friday's game.

"I played eight seasons for St. Joe's," Magni said. "I'm still friends with a lot of their players."

One of those players is St. Joe's player/coach Brian Hayes.

"Ryan and I are good friends," Hayes said. "We talked on the phone for an hour earlier today. I also have a batting cage at my house that he uses."

St. Joseph's entered the home game with a 3-0 record.

The winning pitcher was Matt Drobiak, who graduated from South Hadley High School. The righthander

allowed four runs on six hits during the first four innings. He walked one and struck out one.

"In the Tri-County League, a starter only needs to go four innings to be the winning pitcher," said Magni, who pitched the final three innings to earn the save. "Matt pitched very well in tonight's game. I also coached him at Holyoke Community College the past two years."

Magni, who began last Friday's game at second base and had two base hits, took over as the baseball coach at HCC in 2022. He isn't going to return to that position next

Matt Drobiak delivers a pitch home.

Trey Yesu pitches for St. Joe's.

fielder Xavion Maldonado, who also finished the game with three base hits.

Feltovic worked the first three innings. He was replaced on the mound by Trey Yesu, who was the ace of the Bridgewater State University pitching staff during the past couple of years. Yesu graduated from Monson High School.

The home team responded in the bottom half of the opening frame with a double by centerfielder Pat

See TRI-COUNTY, page 8



Nate Carillon catches the ball.



Ramon Jimenez fields a grounder.



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com
Dillon Slattery, of Ware, picks up a ground ball.



Caleigh Foley sends a quick pass away.



Jenna Kalwa settles the ball.



Kendall Bodak, of Monson, tries to settle the ball.



Rachel Marchini winds up for a free kick.

Busy schedule continues for Mutiny

LUDLOW — The New England Mutiny continues double duty, playing in both the UWS and USL-W leagues. Last week, they were in action for two games, facing both the Maine Mystics in a UWS game, then followed that with a USL-W game against rival AC Connecticut. Neither final score was reported. The Mutiny were in action earlier this week against Hudson Valley and next face the Maine Footy on Saturday, June 13.



Laci Lewis turns play around.



Bella Meadows gets the stop.

Turley photos by David Henry
www.sweetdogphotos.com

Kayleigh Lukasik rears back for a touch.

Western Mass. Pioneers score shutout of Connecticut Rush

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

LUDLOW – Ben Alexander and Martin Echarren are two of the first-year members of the Western Mass. Pioneers.

The duo played key roles in the Pioneers 1-0 shutout victory over the Connecticut Rush before a large crowd at historic Lusitano Stadium, last Friday night.

“We really needed to win tonight’s game, especially after we lost our last game,” said Pioneers head coach Federico Molinari. “We just need to keep up with the other teams that are ahead of us.”

The home win improved the Pioneers season record to 3-1-0. Their only setback came six days earlier at home against NEFC, 4-2, who’s

currently sitting in first place in the USL League Two Northeast Division table.

NEFC, who’s a second-year member of the USL League Two, had a perfect 6-0 record after their first six matches.

Vermont Green FC, who are the defending National Champions, are sitting in second place with a 4-0-0 record followed by the Pioneers in third place.

The Pioneers won’t be facing NEFC again during the regular season. Their only meeting versus the Vermont Green is slated to take place at Lusitano Stadium on July 10, which is the regular season finale.

The Conn. Rush are sitting in fourth place with a 2-2-1 mark.

The top two finishers in

the league standings will qualify for the USL-League two playoffs in July.

The Pioneers began the regular season by playing three of the first four matches in front of their faithful supporters.

Alexander, who’s the Pioneers starting goalkeeper, posted a 1-0 road shutout against the Seacoast United Phantoms on May 20. The Western Mass. squad posted a 4-2 win over the Albany Rush in the season opener.

The only goal of last Friday’s match was scored on a penalty kick by Echarren during the 39th minute of the opening half.

Referee Carlos Garcia awarded the PK after Thomas Wadas, who graduated from Ludlow High School a year ago, was fouled in the box

after stealing the ball away from a Rush player.

Echarren stepped up to the spot and lined a shot into the upper right corner of the net past goalie Michael Sipples. It was his third goal of the season.

“I had a lot of confidence that I would be able to make the PK,” Echarren said. “I made a couple of penalty kicks for my college team.”

Echarren, who’s from Tandil, Argentina, was a freshman on the University of Charleston men’s soccer team last fall. He was selected as the Mountain East Conference Freshmen of the Year after scoring nine goals. He also had four assists.

The Pioneers managed to hold onto the 1-0 advantage for the rest of the match.

Alexander made a total

of nine saves in recording his second shutout.

“It felt really good to post another shutout,” said Alexander, who’s from Chilliwack, British Columbia, Canada. “During the course of the game, I did a lot of talking with my defense. I just wanted to make sure we were on the same page. I’ve really enjoyed playing for the Pioneers.”

The Pioneers defensive unit is led by Jaiden Willems, Dylan Hunston, Vasco Teixeira, and Yigit Kilic.

Alexander began his collegiate soccer career at the University of South Carolina.

The Gamecocks are a member of the SEC in every sport, including the women’s soccer team, except in men’s soccer. The men’s soccer team are members of the Sunbelt

Conference.

“Not a lot of the SEC schools have a men’s soccer team,” Alexander said. “That’s why the South Carolina men’s soccer team compete in the Sunbelt Conference.”

After two seasons playing at South Carolina, Alexander decided to transfer to Boston University.

“It was just time for a change,” he said. “The B.U. soccer team has been doing very well during the past couple of years.”

Alexander will be playing one more season for the Terriers before he graduates

The Rush outshot the Pioneers, 9-8.

The Pioneers will be playing four straight road matches before returning home to face the Boston Bolts at 7:30 pm on June 19.

T-Birds raise money for Rays of Hope at Pink in the Rink game

SPRINGFIELD – The Springfield Thunderbirds and the T-Birds Foundation are proud to announce a donation of \$28,000 to the Rays of Hope as a result of proceeds from the live jersey auction and fundraising elements from the T-Birds’ 9th Annual Pink in the Rink game on March 7.

Thunderbirds President Nathan Costa, Vice President of Sales & Strategy Todd McDonald, and Managing Partner Paul Picknelly presented a check to Rays of Hope earlier this month at the MassMutual Center. The Thunderbirds’ ninth annual Pink in the Rink game once again served as a powerful centerpiece in the organization’s ongoing fight against

breast cancer, raising another impactful total through auctions of the team’s pink-themed, game-worn jerseys. The team also extended its “Pink” sellout streak, welcoming a capacity crowd of 6,793 fans for the ninth consecutive Pink in the Rink event.

“Pink in the Rink continues to be one of the most meaningful and cherished traditions in our community and one of the most anticipated days of the year,” said Costa. “Our partnership with Baystate Health and the Rays of Hope continues to bring people together in an incredible show of hope, strength, and support. As we now look ahead to our 10th annual Pink in the Rink game next

March, there’s a real sense of excitement and pride surrounding what this event has grown into. The atmosphere in the Thunderdome is always unforgettable, the personal stories shared throughout the night are incredibly powerful, and the bravery of survivors continues to inspire all of us. We’re already looking forward to making the 10th edition our most impactful yet as we continue supporting the fight for a cure.”

Established during the Thunderbirds’ inaugural 2016-17 season, “Pink in the Rink” marks the launch of the Rays of Hope fundraising campaign each March, shining a spotlight on breast cancer awareness outside

of the traditional October awareness month. Each year, those fundraising efforts culminate with the annual Rays of Hope Walk & Run in downtown Springfield each October. Since the tradition began, the Thunderbirds have helped raise more than \$200,000 for the Rays of Hope, with every dollar staying local in Western Massachusetts to support patients, families, and the ongoing pursuit of a cure.

“We are so fortunate to have the Thunderbirds as dedicated partners,” said Kathy Tobin, Interim Vice President of Philanthropy for Baystate Health. “Each year Pink in the Rink draws attention to breast cancer and kicks off the Rays of Hope

fundraising season which is critical to our success. Rays of Hope means so much to our survivors and it’s emotional to see the tremendous community support, led by the Springfield Thunderbirds and their fans.

Since its founding in 1994, Rays of Hope has raised more than \$18.2 million to support women and men across Western Massachusetts impacted by breast cancer. Funds raised through the organization also help advance critical research efforts at the Rays of Hope Center for Breast Cancer Research, while providing local support, services, and resources for patients and families throughout the region.

The T-Birds Foundation was established in 2018 with a mission of serving the Springfield community and the Pioneer Valley beyond every win and loss through a focus on providing and supporting initiatives in the areas of health and wellness, youth enrichment, and civil service. During the 2025-26 season, the T-Birds Foundation raised approximately \$150,000 for charitable causes in Western Massachusetts.

The 2026 Rays of Hope Walk & Run Toward the Cure of Breast Cancer will be held on Sunday, October 18. For more information, visit Baystatehealth.org/Raysofhope or call 413-794-8001.



Ryan Magni makes an off-balance throw. Turley photos by David Henry

TRI-COUNTY, from page 7

Fitzgibbons (2-for-4), which scored shortstop Devin Slattery, who leadoff with a single to left.

Slattery, who graduated from Ware High School, was named as the Tri-County League MVP last year. He led his team with three base hits against Teddy Bear Pools.

The visiting team put two more runs on the right field scoreboard with two outs in the second inning.

Shortstop Ray Toth, who graduated from Granby High School, doubled home the first run. He scored when Jimenez blasted a triple to right field.

Teddy Bear Pools, who are playing their home games at South Hadley High School, scored another run in the third giving them a 6-1 lead.

St. Joe’s, who had nine base hits, answered back with an RBI single from Fitzgibbons and a sacrifice fly by first baseman Bobby Trigillo.

Both teams scored a run in the fourth inning.

Then Teddy Bear Pools pretty much put the game out of reach by scoring five more runs in the fifth inning.

Toth, who’s currently a member of the Wheaton College baseball team, contributed with a two-run single. After loading the bases, right fielder Bailey Griggs cleared them with a triple to right.

Trailing, 12-4, St. Joe’s could only score single runs in the fifth and sixth innings.

St. Joe’s will be looking to even the season series when they host Teddy Bear Pools for the second time on June 19.

Stafford Speedway hosts Casella Waste SK 80 event

STAFFORD SPRINGS, CT – Stafford Speedway was back in action on Friday, June 5 with the Casella Waste SK 80, the \$3,000 to win first leg of the Sign Pro Triple Crown. Jon Puleo was the big winner of the night, using a dominating drive to notch his first win of the 2026 season in the Casella Waste SK 80. Michael Bennett was a Late Model winner for the first time in nearly 5 years at Stafford, Jason Finkbein came out a first-time SK Light feature winner after an eventful finish, Rich Hammann scored his first win of 2026 in the Limited Late Model feature, and Ryan Waterman took down what is already his fourth win of 2026 in the Street Stock feature.

In the Casella Waste SK 80 feature, Glen Reen charged around polesitter Jon Puleo to take the early race lead. Puleo came right back to the inside of Reen on lap-2 to move to the front. Bryan Narducci was third in line with Marcello Rufrano in fourth and Michael Christopher, Jr. fifth. The caution came out with 4 laps complete as Frank Ruocco got into the turn 3 wall and

the cars of Wade Gagner, Josh Zentek, and Ethan Durocher all spun.

Reen took the lead back from Puleo on the restart but again Puleo took one lap behind Reen before he went back into the lead. Narducci took second with Rufrano and Reen now wheel to wheel for third and Christopher in fifth. Narducci made a move to the inside of Puleo on lap-9 but Puleo still had the lead by a nose at the line and he went back in front of Narducci on lap-10. Rufrano won the duel with Reen for third but he now had Christopher to his inside and Christopher took third place on lap-11. Reen was still fifth with Tyler Chapman, Noah Korner, Andrew Molleur, Mikey Flynn, and David Arute making up the top-10.

Puleo was starting to stretch out his advantage over Narducci in second and with 22 laps complete the running order was Puleo, Narducci, Christopher, Rufrano, Reen, Chapman, Molleur, Flynn, Korner, and Arute. Nickolas Hovey spun in turn 2 to bring the caution flag out with 26 laps complete.

Puleo took the lead on

the restart with Christopher moving into second. Reen was side by side with Narducci for third with Molleur and Rufrano side by side for fifth place. Reen briefly took third on lap-29 but Narducci came right back and maintained the position. Reen completed a pass for third on lap-30 and the caution came back out with 31 laps complete for Durocher who spun in turn 4.

A Talladega melee broke out on the restart as Puleo didn’t quite come up to speed with the cars of Tyler Hines, Arute, Alex Pearl, David Flammia, Jr., Dylan Izzo, Matt Vassar, Art Caruso, Noah Korner, Keith Rocco, and Wade Gagner all involved to bring the caution flag back out immediately.

Puleo took the lead with Christopher and Narducci right behind him. Christopher nearly took the lead on lap-33 but Puleo was able to fend off his challenge. Reen was fourth in line with Chapman up to fifth. Molleur was sixth followed by Flynn, Troy Talman, Rocco, and Owen. Molleur took fifth from Chapman on lap-38 while the same lap saw Rocco take eighth place from Talman.

With 50 laps complete Puleo was still in command with Christopher, Narducci, Reen, Molleur, Rocco, Flynn, Chapman, Talman, and Todd Owen giving chase. Puleo was starting to ever so slowly pull away from Christopher in second while Christopher was building up a margin over Narducci in third. Reen was working Narducci over for third and they made contact on lap-60 but both cars maintained position and kept on fighting for third place. Reen was finally able to make a pass on Narducci on lap-65 to take over third place while Puleo and Christopher were still comfortably in first and second.

With 10 laps to go the order was Puleo, Christopher, Reen, Narducci, Rocco, Molleur, Flynn, Chapman, Riely O’Keefe, and Talman. Chapman got loose in turn 4 which allowed O’Keefe to take eighth place on lap-71. Puleo led the field to the checkered flag to pick up his first win of the 2026 season with a dominating drive. Christopher finished second with Reen, Narducci, and Rocco rounding out the top-5.

SOX, from page 7

Ocean State to one hit and walk while keeping the deficit at four runs.

“We kept it there,” Blue Sox head coach John Raiola said. “Bruno, LaBuda and LeFrancois came in and kept it at five runs, giving us a chance.”

That chance came for Valley in the eighth.

Ocean State reliever Max Marchetti entered after Sawyer Deering delivered four scoreless innings in relief. Marchetti pitched just 0.1 innings for Northeastern this spring and did not appear during the previous two seasons while

redshirting.

Valley’s rally began without a hit. Scott Donahue reached on a throwing error by shortstop Justin Hackett before Anthony Tirado was hit by a pitch, leaving two ducks sitting on the pond with no outs.

After both runners advanced, Anthony Grabau drove in the Blue Sox’s second run of the game with an RBI groundout. Trevor Harmon followed with a single to center field that cut the deficit to 5-3.

Ocean State’s command troubles continued from there. Eddison Esquivel was hit by a pitch, and Chris Carson worked a walk to load the bases. Brett Rogers

then brought home another run with a groundout before a wild pitch allowed Trevor Harmon to score from third and Esquivel to score from second, tying the game at 5-5.

By the time the Waves’ Andrew Jacobs entered to relieve Marchetti and record the final out of the inning, Valley had sent eight batters to the plate and scored four runs on just one hit.

“When you have traffic on the bases late in the game, it just creates some pressure,” Raiola said.

The sequence continued an uneven opening week for Ocean State’s pitching staff. The Waves entered Saturday having issued 13 walks in

a 20-1 loss to Danbury on Friday, and they also allowed runs to score on wild pitches in Thursday’s game against Bristol.

Raiola said both teams are still adjusting to the unique circumstances of summer baseball.

“All of our guys are in unfamiliar spaces [and] so are they,” Raiola said. “You see some guys pitching in spots or playing positions that they don’t normally play a lot at school.”

The Blue Sox completed the comeback in the ninth when Nico Soul singled, advanced on an error and scored on Tirado’s RBI single to secure the 6-5 victory.

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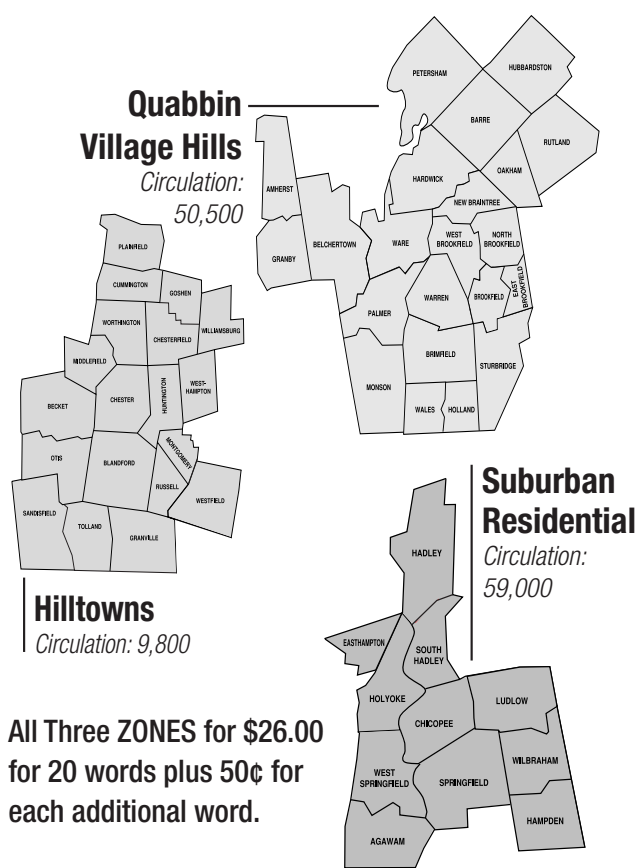
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Public Notices

CITY OF HOLYOKE PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The Holyoke Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on **Tuesday, June 23 2026, at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom.com** ID: 836 3939 8493; CALL IN *67 646 558 8656 to hear, pursuant to the Holyoke Zoning Ordinance, Section 4.6.3.2, a Special Permit for an Exceed in Fence Height for Mathylsha Reyes, at 187 West Franklin Street Holyoke, MA (060-09-005/-006)

The complete application may be viewed through the Holyoke Planning Dept M-F, 8:30-4 p.m. Applicant: Mathylsha Reyes Planning Board:
Lauren Niles, Chairperson
06/05, 06/12/2026

INVITATION TO BID IFB 2026-58 ANNEX PAINTING 4TH FLOOR INTERIOR PAINTING CITY HALL ANNEX HOLYOKE, MASSACHUSETTS

The City of Holyoke, acting through its Purchasing Department, invites sealed bids from qualified contractors for interior painting services on the Fourth Floor of the City Hall Annex located at 20 Korean Veterans Plaza, Holyoke, Massachusetts. This project is funded with Federal Funds. Respondents will be verified for their eligibility to receive Federal Funds and must comply with all Federal Regulations including Part 200. The work must comply with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 149 and shall include all labor, materials, equipment, supervision, insurance, tools, transportation, permits, clean-up, and incidentals necessary to complete the work described herein. The project consists of painting walls, ceilings, and trim throughout the Fourth Floor of the City Hall Annex. The City will select final paint colors after contract award in coordination with the successful bidder. The area is approx 10 rooms, which mainly consist of occupied office space. Contractor is expected to paint, patch, minor patching, 2 coats on walls and 2 coats on ceilings. Square footage of the rooms is 2,720 this measurement did not include the ceilings and is only the floor measurements.

A non-mandatory but highly recommended pre-bid site visit is scheduled for Wednesday, June 17, 2026 at 10 AM at the City Hall Annex 4th floor, located at 20 Korean Veterans Plaza, Holyoke, MA 01040. Documents will be available starting on 6/10/2026 at 10am by electronic request from morrowj@holyoake.org

SUBMISSIONS ARE DUE NO LATER THAN 2PM (EST) ON JUNE 30th, 2026. Submissions are to be submitted electronically to morrowj@holyoake.org. Attention is called to the minimum wage rates required to be paid for all labor on this project. Wage rates are established in schedules issued by the Department of Labor and Workforce Development, in accordance with Section 26A - 27D, or Chapter 149 of the M.G.L., as amended, and the U.S. Department of Labor in accordance with the Davis-Bacon and Related Acts. Said schedule(s) are included in the bid package and the contractor will be responsible for paying the higher of the two rates. The city reserves the right to reject any and all bids, no late submissions will be accepted.
06/12/2026

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Hampden Probate and Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
Docket No.
HD26P1233GD
In the matter of:
Michael J Britton
Of: Holyoke, MA
RESPONDENT**

**Alleged Incapacitated Person
CITATION GIVING NOTICE
OF PETITION FOR
APPOINTMENT OF
GUARDIAN FOR
INCAPACITATED
PERSON PURSUANT TO
G.L. c. 190B, §5-304**

To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, a petition has been filed by
Timothy W Britton of Holyoke, MA
Mary T Britton of Holyoke, MA

in the above captioned matter alleging that **Michael J Britton** is in need of a Guardian and requesting that

Timothy W Britton of Holyoke, MA
Mary T Britton of Holyoke, MA

(or some other suitable person) be appointed as Guardian to serve **Without Surety** on the bond.

The petition asks the court to determine that the Respondent is incapacitated, that the appointment of a Guardian is necessary, and that the proposed Guardian is appropriate. The petition is on file with this court and may contain a request for certain specific authority.

You have the right to object to this proceeding. If you wish to do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance at this court on or before 10:00 a.m. on the return date of **07/06/2026**. This day is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date by which you have to file the written appearance if you object to the petition. If you fail to file the written appearance by the return date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you. In addition to filing the written appearance, you or your attorney must file a written affidavit stating the specific facts and grounds of your objection within 30 days after the return date.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE
The outcome of this proceeding may limit or completely take away the above-named person's right to make decisions about personal affairs or financial affairs or both. The above-named person has the right to ask for a lawyer. Anyone may make this request on behalf of the above-named person. If the above-named person cannot afford a lawyer, one may be appointed at State expense.**

WITNESS, Hon. **Claudine T. Stoudemire**, First Justice of this Court.
Date: June 05, 2026

Rosemary A. Saccomani
Register of Probate
06/12/2026

**LEGAL NOTICE
CITY OF HOLYOKE
GAS & ELECTRIC
DEPARTMENT
HADLEY FALLS STATION
ROOF REPLACEMENT**

Sealed bids for furnishing the above will be received by Holyoke Gas & Electric Dept. until **2:00 p.m. July 7, 2026**, at the Office of the Manager, 99 Suffolk St., Holyoke, MA 01040, at which time the bids will be publicly opened and read.

Bid Deposit:
A Bid Deposit in the amount of 5% of total bid value must accompany all bids and may be in the form of a certified, treasurer's, or cashier's check payable to HG&E from a responsible bank or trust company; cash; or a bid bond from a licensed surety payable to HG&E.

Prevailing Wage Rates:
Rates, which are to apply to the work, are set by the Mass. Dept. of Labor & Industries.

Additional information may be obtained from:
Chi Wong
Holyoke Gas & Electric Dept.
99 Suffolk St.
Holyoke, MA 01040
(413) 536-9308
cwong@hged.com
The right is hereby reserved to reject any or all bids, or to accept any bid that in the opinion of the Manager may be in the best interest of the City of Holyoke.

Please mark sealed envelopes "HADLEY FALLS STATION Roof Replacement" and address them to:

James M. Lavelle, Manager
Holyoke Gas & Electric Dept.
99 Suffolk St.
Holyoke, MA 01040
06/12/2026

**CITY OF HOLYOKE
PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

The Local Historic District Commission will hold a Public Hearing on **Wednesday, July 1, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom** to hear, pursuant to Historical District Acts (Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40C, as amended, and the Holyoke Code of Ordinances (Chapter 18-100) Certificate of Appropriateness for proposed exterior work within a local historic district at 68 Fairfield Avenue, Holyoke MA (103-00-046).

Zoom Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88458964124?pwd=PgSaC9d7TyOZbhzCzM6>

CH0SMkbPsqeI.1 Passcode: 486016# Meeting ID: 884 5896 4124 Call in: +16465588656,,88 458964124#,,,,*486016#

A complete copy of the application may be seen at the Holyoke City Clerk's office. M-F. 9:00 am to 4:30 pm
APPLICANT:
68 Fairfield Avenue,
Jesse Castellano
Holyoke Local Historic District Commission
Chairperson:
Katherine Hopki
06/12, 6/19/2026

**CITY OF HOLYOKE
PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

The Holyoke Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on **Tuesday, June 23 2026, at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom.com** ID: 836 3939 8493; CALL IN *67 646 558 8656 to hear, pursuant to the Holyoke Zoning Ordinance, Section 6.4.6.4, a Special Permit for an Increase in Sign Size and for Multiple Signs for Holyoke Mall Company, LP - Pyramid Companies, at 50 Holyoke St, Holyoke, MA (176-00-010B/-010C)

The complete application may be viewed through the Holyoke Planning Dept M-F, 8:30-4 p.m. Applicant: Takeform Planning Board:
Lauren Niles, Chairperson
06/05, 06/12/2026

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Hampden Division
Docket No.
HD26P0605EA
Estate of:
Lorraine Frances Janis
Date of Death:
February 11, 2026
INFORMAL PROBATE
PUBLICATION NOTICE**

To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner **Deborah A Janis of Holyoke, MA**

a Will has been admitted to informal probate.

Deborah A Janis of Holyoke, MA has been informally appointed as the Personal Representative of the estate to serve **without surety** on the bond.

The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the administration and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings and to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Representatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner.
06/12/2026

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Hampden Probate and Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
(413)748-7758
Docket No.
HD25P0999EA
Estate of:
Lawrence Emil Jodoin
Also known as:
Lawrence E Jodoin
Date of Death: 11/17/2024
CITATION ON PETITION
FOR FORMAL
ADJUDICATION**

To all interested persons:
A Petition for S/A - Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by **Harriet N Jodoin of Chicopee, MA** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests that **John J Ferriter of Holyoke, MA** be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in **unsupervised administration**.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE
You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection**

at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 07/09/2026. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

**UNSUPERVISED
ADMINISTRATION UNDER
THE MASSACHUSETTS
UNIFORM PROBATE CODE
(MUPC)**

A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.

WITNESS, Hon. **Claudine T. Stoudemire**, First Justice of this Court.

Date: June 04, 2026
Rosemary A Saccomani,
Register of Probate
06/12/2026

**INVITATION TO BID
Jones Point Park
Improvements
Bid #2026-52P**

Sealed bids for Jones Point Park Improvements, Holyoke, MA will be received on **July 9, 2026** at the City of Holyoke Office of Procurement, 536 Dwight Street, Room 3, Holyoke, Massachusetts 01040, Attn: Jaime Morrow, Chief Procurement Officer **until 2 PM prevailing time**, at which time the bids will be publicly opened and read aloud.

The work under this contract shall include park improvements including installation of a walking path, basketball court resurfacing, parking improvements, and other incidental construction related to the project. Bidding procedures shall be in accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 30, Section 39 M as amended.

This project may be funded in whole or part with federal funds.

A non-mandatory Pre-Bid briefing will occur on Thursday, June 18, 2026 at 10 AM EST at Jones Point Park, 60 Oxford Rd, Holyoke, MA 01040.

Attention is called to the minimum wage rates required to be paid for all labor on this project. Wage rates are established in schedules issued by the Department of Labor and Workforce Development, in accordance with Section 26A - 27D, or Chapter 149 of the M.G.L., as amended, and the U.S. Department of Labor in accordance with the Davis-Bacon and Related Acts. Said schedule(s) are included in the bid package and the contractor will be responsible for paying the higher of the two rates. Beginning at 10 AM on June 10, 2026, all project documents will be distributed and supplied by the City of Holyoke's in electronic format only. Submit requests for documents to Jaime Morrow, Chief Procurement Officer, at morrowj@holyoake.org between the hours of 8:30 AM and 4:30 PM. Requests shall include firm name and address, contact name and title, email address, and telephone number. Any questions need to be submitted in writing via email to morrowj@holyoake.org by **June 23, 2026 @ 2PM**. The answers will be issued via addenda to all bid holders no later than July 1, 2026. The Successful Bidder will be required to provide a performance bond, and a labor and materials payment bond, issued by a company authorized to do business in Massachusetts and satisfactory to the Awarding Authority. The Performance Bond and Payment Bonds shall be in the amount of 100% of the Contract Amount. All work under this Contract shall be substantially completed per the specifications and to the satisfaction of the City of Holyoke within 90 calendar days. The estimated value of this contract, including all bid alternates, is \$396,900.00. The bidder Contractor shall also be MassDOT, Highways Division, Prequalified in the class of work "RECREATION FACILITIES". An award will not be made to a Contractor who is not pre-qualified with the MassDOT Highway

Division prior to the opening of proposals. The bidder agrees that its bid shall be good and may not be withdrawn for a period of 45 days, Saturdays, Sundays and legal holidays excluded, after the opening of the bids. The Awarding Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bids, and/or waive any informality, if it is deemed to be in the public interest so to do.
06/12/2026

**NOTICE OF
MORTGAGEE'S
SALE OF REAL ESTATE**

By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by M Tran Properties LLC to Danny S. Laroche and David N. Laroche, Trustees of the 948 Dwight Street Realty Trust, said mortgage being dated August 25, 2023, and recorded in the Hampden County Registry of Deeds in Book 25131, Page 51, of which mortgage the undersigned is the present holder, for breach of the conditions of said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing, the same will be sold at Public Auction at **11:00 A.M. on Thursday, July 2, 2026**, upon the premises described in said mortgage, namely 948 Dwight Street and 0 Whiting Avenue, Holyoke, Hampden County, MA 01040, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage, to wit:

That certain parcel of land situated in Holyoke, Hampden County, Massachusetts, with the buildings thereon, being more particularly bounded and described as follows:

PARCEL 1
Beginning at a point of intersection of the southerly side of West Dwight Street with the westerly side of Whiting Avenue, and thence running

WESTERLY on said West Dwight Street, fifty-four (54) feet, more or less, to land now or formerly of one Neil; thence running

SOUTHERLY along land of said Neil, ninety (90) feet to land now or formerly of one McCrohan; thence running

EASTERLY along land of said McCrohan fifty-four (54) feet, more or less, to said Whiting Avenue; thence

NORTHERLY on said Whiting Avenue, ninety (90) feet to the place of beginning.

PARCEL 2
Beginning at the northeasterly corner of said lot on the west line of Whiting Avenue, so-called, ninety (90) feet southerly from West Dwight Street; thence running

WESTERLY on land now or formerly of George Thayer and land now or formerly of John H. Clifford, one hundred (100) feet to a stake and stones; thence

SOUTHERLY by land now or formerly of G.N. Philbrick, forty (40) feet to a stake; and thence running

EASTERLY on land now or formerly of Henry Coombs, one hundred (100) feet to said Whiting Avenue, thence by the west line of said Whiting Avenue, forty (40) feet to the place of beginning.

Said real estate is known and numbered 948 Dwight Street, Holyoke, Massachusetts.

Said premises will be sold subject to and/or with the benefit of any and all rights, rights of way, restrictions, easements, improvements, covenants, outstanding tax title, municipal or other public taxes, assessments, liens or claims in the nature of liens, rights of parties in possession, and existing encumbrances of record created prior to the mortgage, if any there be, whether or not reference to such restrictions, easements, improvements, liens or encumbrances is made in the Deed.

No representations, express or implied, are made with respect to any matter concerning the premises which will be sold "as is".

The successful high bidder will be responsible for paying the Massachusetts State Documentary Tax Stamps, all closing costs and all recording fees.

TERMS OF SALE: The highest bidder in the sale shall be required to deposit cash, bank treasurer's check or certified check in the amount of **FIFTEEN THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$15,000.00)** at the time and the place of the sale of the premises to qualify as a bidder (the present holder of the mortgage is exempt from this requirement) to be held by the Mortgagee. The successful bidder

will also be required to deposit an additional sum equal to ten percent (10%) of the amount bid less the \$15,000.00 deposit (but no less than \$15,000) with the Mortgagee's auctioneer, Aaron Posnik & Co., Inc., 31 Capital Drive, West Springfield, Massachusetts 01089 or the Mortgagee's attorney as may be directed within five (5) days of the date of the sale to be held by the Mortgagee, and the balance of the purchase price shall be paid in cash, certified or bank treasurer's check at the closing which shall occur within thirty (30) days after the date of foreclosure sale, time being of the essence, unless the Mortgagee agrees otherwise. The successful bidder at the sale will also be required to pay a buyer's premium of 5% and shall sign a Memorandum of Terms of Sale containing the above terms at the auction sale.

In the event that the successful bidder at the public auction shall default in purchasing the within described property according to the terms of this Notice of Mortgagee's Sale and/or the terms of the Memorandum of Sale executed at the public auction, the Mortgagee reserves the right, at its election, to sell the property to the second highest bidder at the public auction provided that Mortgagee, in its discretion, may require (1) said second highest bidder to deposit the amount of the required deposit as set forth herein within three (3) business days after written notice to the second highest bidder of the default of the previous highest bidder, (2) the second highest bidder to execute a Memorandum of Sale, and (3) the closing to occur within twenty (20) days of said written notice, time being of the essence unless the Mortgagee agrees otherwise. The Mortgagee reserves the right to sell any parcel or any portion thereof separately, or in any order that Mortgagee may choose and/or to postpone this sale to a later time or date by public proclamation at the time and date appointed for the sale and to further postpone any adjourned sale date by public proclamation at the time and date appointed for the adjourned sale date.

Other terms, if any, to be announced at the time and place of the sale.

The description for the premises contained in said mortgage shall control in the event of a typographical error in this publication.

Danny S. Laroche and David N. Laroche, Trustees of the 948 Dwight Street Realty Trust, Present Holder of said Mortgage

By /s/ David A. Lavenburg
David A. Lavenburg,
Its Attorney
BACON WILSON, P.C.
33 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
413-781-0560
06/05, 06/12, 06/19/2026

**CITY OF HOLYOKE
PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

The Holyoke Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on **Tuesday, June 23 2026, at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom.com** ID: 836 3939 8493; CALL IN *67 646 558 8656 to hear, pursuant to the Holyoke Zoning Ordinance, Section 6.4.6.4, a Special Permit for an Increase in Sign Size and for Multiple Signs for Schermerhorn's Restaurant, at 224 Westfield Road, Holyoke, MA (157-00-072)

The complete application may be viewed through the Holyoke Planning Dept M-F, 8:30-4 p.m. Applicant:
F&M Hideway, Inc.
Planning Board:
Lauren Niles, Chairperson
06/05, 06/12/2026

Please check the accuracy of your legal notice prior to submission (i.e., date, time, spelling). Also, be sure the requested publication date coincides with the purpose of the notice, or as the law demands. Thank you.

Public Notices

City of Holyoke Notice of Public Hearing

The Ordinance Committee of the Holyoke City Council and the Planning Board will hold separate public hearings to hear a zoning ordinance text change proposal to amend Section 6.4.6 Signs in Business and Industrial Districts, Size Limitations Table, of the Zoning Ordinance to increase the maximum surface area permitted for each sign by special permit from 80 sf to 400 sf by special permit of the Planning Board, for projects having 50,000 sf of building area or greater, or for projects of such similar size and scale that said increased sign size is appropriate. **Ordinance Committee public hearing will be held on Tuesday, June 30th, 2026 at 6:30 p.m.** at Holyoke City Hall 536 Dwight St and can be accessed remotely via zoom.us Meeting ID 886 8239 2822 Meeting Passcode 994415 or by call in at 1-646-558-8656 with same Meeting ID and Passcode.

Planning Board public hearing will be held on Tuesday, July 28th, 2026 at 5:30 p.m. remotely via zoom.us with Meeting ID 841 8501 6440 or by call in at 1-646-558-8656 using same meeting ID.

To provide comments to the Planning Board, please contact Brianna Tejada at tejadab@holyoke.org. For the Ordinance Committee, please contact City Council Admin Asst Jeffery Anderson-Burgos at Anderson-BurgosJ@holyoke.org or by phone 413-322-5525.

Planning Board Chair
Lauren Niles
Ordinance Chair
Meg Magrath-Smith
06/12, 06/19/2026

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
EXECUTIVE OFFICE FOR ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE
DIVISION OF CAPITAL ASSET MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE

Request for Qualifications for Trade Contractors

Metal Windows; Glass & Glazing; Tile; Acoustical Tile; Resilient Floors; Painting; Fire Protection Sprinkler System; Plumbing; HVAC; Electrical
HCC –
Holyoke Community College,
Marieb Hall Renovations,
Holyoke, MA
Mass State Project No.
HCC2301

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts, through its Division of Capital Asset Management & Maintenance (DCAMM), requests that qualified and experienced Trade Contractors submit Trade Contractor Statement of Qualifications to be received through DCAMM's E-Bid Room at www.bidexpress.com/businesses/10279/home no later than 12:00 PM, July 8, 2026.

This Project is to renovate approximately 8,500 GSF in a cast-in-place concrete building built in 1971 that primarily houses classrooms, teaching laboratories, offices, and student study and meeting areas.

This Request for Qualifications ("RFQ") is the first phase of a two-phase procurement process as set forth in MGL Chapter 149A. DCAMM, through its Trade Contractor Prequalification Committee is prequalifying firms interested in providing public Trade Contractor services on this Public Construction Manager at Risk ("CM at Risk") Project for the renovation at Holyoke Community College, Marieb Hall, Holyoke, MA., through this RFQ process.

Trade Contractor Statement of Qualifications Forms from interested Trade Contractors are sought for the following Ten (10) categories of work: Metal Windows (\$104,803); Glass & Glazing (\$27,333); Tile (\$66,065); Acoustical Tile (\$133,145); Resilient Floors (\$35,500); Painting (\$80,450); Fire Protection Sprinkler System (\$435,879); Plumbing (\$370,316); HVAC (\$2,049,791);

Electrical (\$751,648). Only pre-qualified firms will be permitted to submit bids for the categories of work in which they were pre-qualified. Construction Manager is Downes Construction Co., LLC.

The Request for Qualifications may be downloaded from DCAMM's E-Bid Room at https://www.bidexpress.com/businesses/10279/home on or after **Wednesday, June 10, 2026**. Instructions on the E-Bid Room processes can be found on DCAMM's website www.mass.gov/dcammbids or contact DCAMM's Bid Room at bidroom.dcammb@mass.gov or 617-727-4003.
06/12/2026

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Hampden Division
Docket No.
HD26P1103EA
Estate of:
Helen Marie Werenski
Also Known As:
Helen M. Werenski
Date of Death: 1/19/2026
INFORMAL PROBATE PUBLICATION NOTICE

To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner

Susan A. Foran of Holyoke, MA

Thomas E. Werenski of Holyoke, MA

a Will has been admitted to informal probate.

Susan A. Foran of Holyoke, MA

Thomas E. Werenski of Holyoke, MA

has been informally appointed as the Personal Representative of the estate to serve **without surety** on the bond.

The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory

and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings and to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Representatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner.
06/12/2026

PUBLIC NOTICES ARE NOW ONLINE

- 1 Email all notices to notices@turley.com
- 2 Access archives and digital tear sheets by newspaper title.
- 3 Find a quick link to the state of Massachusetts' public notice web site to search all notices in Massachusetts newspapers.

Public notice deadlines are Mondays at noon, Fridays noon for Monday holidays.

visit www.publicnotices.turley.com

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HEALTH, from page 4

ambiguous language that can be difficult for you to understand, which may lead to disputes over coverage.

If you have questions about your policy, talk to your human resources department or call the company directly. Keep notes about who you spoke to and when and what they said.

Open the mail!

Pay attention to what your insurance company is sending you, even if you think you know what's in the envelope. It may be an explanation of benefits (EOB), a bill or even, in the case of the Florida woman, a notice that her premiums weren't up to date.

There's a reason the companies print "important insurance information" on the outside of the envelope.

Use the insurance company portal

You don't have to wait for mail. Your policy is available to read in the customer portal, and claims usually show up pretty quickly. It will tell you if your premiums are up to date, how your claim was paid (or not) and what the appeals process in.

Check in with the portal regularly.

Is the doc in your network?

Medicare Advantage plans, which are HMOs, keep a network of approved providers. If your primary doctor is referring you to a specialist, your first stop is the list of network providers on the insurance website.

If the info on the website is wrong or outdated, you'll be on the hook for payment. Call the doctor's office to make sure they accept your insurance.

Pay attention to prior authorizations and referrals

Some insurers require a referral from the primary provider if you have to see a specialist. Original Medicare doesn't have this requirement. Prior authorization may also be required for certain procedures or tests, or for certain medications. Missing a prior authorization is a major reason claims are denied and patients end up with full liability.

If a claim is denied, don't panic

A claim may be denied because the person who submitted the claim misspelled your name, gave a wrong

member ID number or used the incorrect diagnostic code. You won't be able to review the claim submission, but if you do get a denial or the coverage isn't what you expected, call the doctor's office and ask them to review the claim for errors. You can also call on the services of a patient advocate.

A popular phrase since the late 1800s is "the devil is in the details." And those details can make or break your insurance coverage.

Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, R.N., a registered nurse and board-certified patient advocate, is the founder of www.NurseAdvocateEntrepreneur.com, which trains medical professionals to become successful private patient advocates. A Monson, MA resident, she is the author of "How to Be a Healthcare Advocate for Yourself & Your Loved Ones" and her new book, "Advocating Well: Strategies for Finding Strength and Understanding in Health Care," available at Amazon.com. Contact her at Teri@NurseAdvocateEntrepreneur.com to set up a free phone consultation.

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HMC to host Nurses Rock

HOLYOKE – Holyoke Medical Center will host Nurses Rock '26, a free appreciation concert for all nurses, regardless of where they work, on Friday, June 19 in Springfield. This event is Holyoke Medical Center's salute to nurse heroes and is free for nurses.

Holyoke Medical Center's Nurses Rock event will include free food, drinks, giveaways, a DJ, dance party, and live music featuring MiniKiss—the hottest littlest band in the world.

"Holyoke Medical Center is proud to honor all

nurses, regardless of where they work, with this free appreciation event," says Sr. Vice President of Patient Care Services and Chief Nursing Officer at Holyoke Medical Center, Margaret-Ann Azzaro DNP, RN, CENP. "This is our way of saying thank you to all nurses for everything they do. We encourage nurses to join us and have fun."

Doors will open at 5:30 p.m. Nurses interested in learning more and registering for the event are encouraged to visit HolyokeHealth.com/nursesrock.

Holyoke Pride 5K set for Saturday morning

HOLYOKE – Runners, walkers, families, and community supporters are invited to lace up their sneakers and celebrate Pride at the Third Annual Holyoke Pride Rainbow Run 5K and 1-Mile Walk on Saturday, June 13 beginning at 10 a.m. at the scenic Ashley Reservoir in Holyoke.

Now in its third year, the Rainbow Run has quickly become one of Holyoke Pride's most popular events, drawing participants from across New England for a morning of fitness, fun, and

community celebration. Whether participants are chasing a personal best, enjoying a leisurely walk with friends, or simply showing their support for the LGBTQIA+ community, everyone is welcome.

Participants are encouraged to wear their brightest Pride colors, rainbow gear, costumes, or team shirts, though no special attire is required. Friends, family members, and spectators are encouraged to attend and cheer participants along the course.

"This event has grown

beyond anything we imagined when we started it," said Jeffrey Anderson-Burgos, Race Organizer and member of the Holyoke Pride Committee. "The Rainbow Run isn't about how fast you are—it's about showing up, being active, celebrating who you are, and sharing that experience with a community that supports one another. Every year we see more families, more first-time runners, more colorful outfits, and more smiles. It's become one of my favorite Pride traditions."

The event features a professionally timed 5K race and a family-friendly 1-mile walk around the beautiful Ashley Reservoir. Participants of all ages and fitness levels are encouraged to join.

Registration is open now at www.holyokepride.org. Same-day registration will also be available, though advance registration is encouraged. The Rainbow Run is part of Holyoke Pride Month celebrations leading up to the fifth annual Holyoke PrideFest on June 27 in Veterans Park.

Westfield River Watershed Association holding river cruise June 13

WESTFIELD – On Saturday, June 13, the Westfield River Watershed Association (WRWA) will sponsor a scenic six-mile paddle from the Great River Bridge in Westfield to Robinson State Park in Agawam. For those used to seeing the river only in glimpses from the road, the family-friendly canoe and kayak cruise offers a new, close-up view of the waterway.

The Cruise begins just

below the Great Bridges in Westfield and continues down to Robinson Park in Agawam.

"Nature enthusiasts will enjoy the early summer vegetation and birdlife. Perhaps you'll spot some of the more charismatic animals such as bald eagles, beavers, or snapping turtles," says Mark Damon, WRWA Board president.

In the past, participants paused paddling to watch a pair of nesting eagles as they soared and landed in a tall tree

along the river.

"People are amazed that the pollution is now gone and the river is really clean. You don't see any of the commercial businesses near the river while paddling, just birds, wildflowers, even beaver dams and animals native to our area," states Phil Sousa, who is a long-time member of the river organization.

Participants need to bring their own canoe, kayak, or paddleboard and their own paddles and personal safe-

ty devices, as well as sunscreen and drinking water. Organizers recommend that participants have some experience paddling, given that river conditions may be unpredictable. Children under 18 must be supervised by a parent or guardian. Children under 14 must paddle in the same boat as an adult. Other suggestions for what to bring include snacks for before and after the cruise, a picnic for an early lunch for the second wave of registrants, or possibly a late

lunch for the first wave of registrants for once you reach Robinson State Park, as well as easy snacks for munching along the way. The cruise typically takes 2-3 hours.

A participation fee of \$20 per person (\$15 for WRWA members) will help cover shuttle service, insurance and light refreshments. Registration begins at 9 a.m. and continues to about 10 a.m. in the municipal parking lot off Meadow Street near the Great River Bridge

in Westfield. Participants will register, unload boats and gear, drive their vehicles to Robinson State Park (parking fees apply) and return by shuttle to the launch area. Staggered Cruise departures will begin around 10:30 a.m. Parking fees at Robinson for the Canoe Cruise are \$5 for Massachusetts residents (\$10 for a Lifetime Senior DCR Pass) and \$20 for out-of-state vehicles.

Please RSVP by emailing info@westfieldriver.org.

DATA, from page 1

location. We have the history. We have the infrastructure. We have the people. We have the architecture. We have affordable opportunities compared to other places in Massachusetts. And I agree with all of this! But potential alone does not build a stronger city. At some point, we have to answer a harder question...Are we moving forward as a city, or are we not?"

Responding to Garcia's thoughts was At-Large City Councilor Mimi Panitch, who shared on social media:

"If this is about data centers in general, or Chestnut River in particular, we cannot demand accountability, environmental protection, et cetera unless and until we have the regulatory mechanisms to require that the work be done," Panitch said. "[D]emanding accountability, environmental protections, traffic studies, good design, community benefits, and responsible growth" doesn't help or happen without those legal mechanisms. Yes, you can make a sort of Potemkin-village procedure, with the cooperation of a developer, but you can't force them to do the disclosure and work, and

you can't make a deal you can enforce."

She then continued her thoughts by citing, "Holyoke just doesn't have that now. The so-called ban is needed now to ensure that Holyoke even has a choice: to do nothing is to say "Yes, and don't worry about any city oversight or meaningful regulation" to any data center proponent that happens to be looking our way. We can always change it up later," she added.

The comment was the latest point of the discussion that arrived during the last city council meeting, where they decided to vote on a motion proposed by Panitch that would ban data centers citywide was sent back to a subcommittee for further discussion. The move was structured to allow councilors more time to weigh competing concerns: environmental risks and infrastructure strain on the one hand, and economic development and tax revenue on the other.

Panitch continued to shed light on the implementation of the data center by highlighting the difference in procedure and size, from local states, by citing a story per the NYT showing the

striking similarity to the one being proposed at Water St.: "This is from a *New York Times* piece on the growing resistance to these facilities. I've pulled it out for a striking number," she said. "The State Legislature approved a plan to pause construction of "hyper-scale" data centers, or facilities capable of using of more than 20 megawatts of electricity, for one year. If signed into law by Gov. Kathy Hochul, a Democrat, New York would be the first state to enact a statewide moratorium. Recognize that number? That 20 MW? That's what the proposal for Holyoke is pitching as "small" or "right-sized." New York's telling us that's a hyper-scale facility," Panitch shared.

Following the timeline, the special meeting transpired this past Thursday, during which a proposed rally took place outside City Hall, as detractors from the community voiced their concerns over the project, which became a running theme on social media and grew a major following, as the organizers shared, "There are no benefits to this coming to our city. Temp jobs at BEST while they build. Our electricity rates will go up. The environ-

mental impacts on an already heavily polluted state. We'll hear the hum all the time," according to the post.

Echoing concerns from the state level was State Senator John Velis, who has gone on the record by raising a point of conversation about the thought by expressing his understanding that the use of AI and the need for supporting data centers are not only becoming a fact of life but also a potential source of economic transformation and growth for the Commonwealth; however, he also advocated his sense of assurance that the energy and water impacts of these centers do not impact local rate payers.

"I firmly believe that Massachusetts needs to continue to be a leader of technological innovation and advancement; in fact I think it is vital for Massachusetts to remain a competitive with other states however, these advances cannot be born on the backs of residents," Velis revealed earlier this month. "Today's costs already put enough strain on residents' wallets, and that is why I firmly believe that any costs associated with data centers should fall squarely on

the facilities that are directly responsible for the increased usage."

In addition to the proposed project in Holyoke, Western Mass neighbor Westfield is being eyed to house a \$2.75 billion center on a 10-acre parcel on Servisar Industrial Way, proposed by Westmass Area Development Corp.

To note, last year, Velis sprang into action as he sent two letters to the Executive Office of Economic Development (EOED) expressing concerns about the potential energy strain posed by data centers. The first letter was sent in October 2025 as the EOED was developing the regulations. It was shared that the final regulations require any developer applying for a state tax incentive program to provide information on peak energy demand. Following the release of the regulations this past March, Velis reiterated in an April letter that "costs associated with increased energy usage or consumption should absolutely not fall to the residents of our communities."

In response to the proposal, the Westfield City Council scheduled a June 18 public hearing on a pro-

posed 12-month moratorium on data centers in the city of Westfield. City Councilor Kristen Mello, chair of the Natural Resources Subcommittee, presented the motion, which also called for sharing the proposal with the Planning Board, passed unanimously.

It's clear that the question of these data centers will be one to be raised, as many will look towards the value of a new oasis of potential revenue, while weighing the implications and safety of environmental regulations, but nonetheless they are here, and the community is trying to adjust, due to the conclusion that a thought once perceived as fictional, far away in a future we long questioned, and one we never deemed, is now taking shape in our backyards.

As of this moment, according to <https://www.datacentermap.com/usa/massachusetts/>, there are 42 data centers in operation and at work, with the highest number being Boston with 27, and tied for the lowest across the state are Holyoke, Andover, Fitchburg, Cambridge, and Acton-Boxborough, all with 1, but it seems that could change.

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RENT, from page 1

year and I was shocked at how high the rent was and that I needed to have a roommate with my doctoral degree, and our rent just went up," Agripino Kennedy said. "I'm kind of scared of what another rent increase might mean for us."

Families and residents who are at risk of being pushed out of Holyoke due to rent costs are all people who support the community one way or another.

"These are families who support local businesses, who invest their money, their energy, and all of their creativity in maintaining Holyoke," Gloria Caballero said.

City councilors agreed that this resolution was worth looking into, however several wanted to have the chance to discuss it in committee to gain notes of clarification.

"I would prefer to have it go to committee so I can have more questions asked," Councilor Israel Rivera said. "One specifically about wording because on the legislative level it's been about rent control and here we're doing rent stabilization."

Councilor Michael Sullivan raised concerns about how this resolution would impact groups who had started affordable housing movements in Holyoke over recent years, such as Whitman Properties, Elliot Properties, Habitat for Humanity and Wayfinders.

Other councilors wanted to vote on the resolution immediately. They saw the support the people of Holyoke had for this order and hoped to take action on it.

"I am in support of this order because I think looking around nationally[...]we have to accept that the market is broken," Councilor Mimi Panitch said.

"The people have spoken," Councilor Richard Purcell said. "There is only one ward that wasn't here tonight, the other six wards spoke in favor of the resolution. This is the people's voice and we were elected to take care of the people."

The council took a vote to decide if it would go to committee first or not, and the committee vote won.

The resolution will be discussed at an upcoming development and government relations committee meeting.

The Holyoke Sun

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